

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Original) A process for separating 2-butanol from an industrial mixture which comprises 2-butanol, tert-butanol and water, wherein the proportion by mass of water is greater than the limit concentration of the distillation boundary line connecting an azeotrope of tert-butanol and water; and an azeotrope of 2-butanol and water, comprising

(a) separating water from the industrial mixture by distillation to obtain a distillate, wherein the distillate has, in terms of the 2-butanol, tert-butanol and water in the industrial mixture, a proportion by mass of water, which at a pressure, is greater than the limit concentration of the distillation boundary line connecting an azeotrope of tert-butanol and water; and an azeotrope of 2-butanol and water;

(b) subsequently changing the pressure so that the mixture has, in terms of the 2-butanol, tert-butanol and water in the distillate, a proportion by mass of water which is less than the limit concentration of the distillation boundary line connecting the distillation boundary line connecting an azeotrope of tert-butanol and water; and an azeotrope of 2-butanol and water; and

(c) subsequently distilling the mixture at the same pressure into a stream comprising 2-butanol and a stream comprising tert-butanol and water.

2. (Original) The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the distillation in (a) is performed on a distillation column.

3. (Currently Amended) The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the distillation in (a) is performed at a pressure of from 0.7 to 5 bar~~bar~~.

4. (Original) The process as claimed in claim 3, wherein the pressure in (b) and (c) is from 0.05 to not more than 0.7 bara.

5. (Original) The process as claimed in claim 3, wherein the pressure in (b) and (c) is from at least 5 to 15 bara.

6. (Original) The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the stream comprising 2-butanol contains less than 2% by mass of tert-butanol.

7. (Currently Amended) The process as claimed in claim 6, wherein the stream comprising 2-butanol contains less than 1.7% by mass of tert-butanol.

8. (Original) The process as claimed in claim 6, wherein a part of the distillate from (c) is combined with the distillate of (a) and used as a feed to the distillation in (c).

9. (Original) The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the separating of the stream comprising 2-butanol comprises taking a vapor phase of a vaporizer of a column; or a gaseous or liquid as a side stream in a stripping section of the column.

10. (Original) The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the pressure in (a) is from 0.4 to 5 bara when the proportion of 2-butanol in the industrial mixture is from 0.001 to 30% by mass.

11. (Original) The process as claimed in claim 10, wherein the pressure in (b) is from 5 to 15 bara.

12. (Original) The process as claimed in claim 10, wherein the pressure in (b) is from 5 to 10 bara.

13. (Original) The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the changing the pressure in (b) comprises increasing the pressure at least 2 times more than the pressure in (a).

14. (Original) The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the stream comprising tert-butanol and water comprises less than 4% by mass of 2-butanol.

15. (Original) The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the stream comprising tert-butanol and water comprises less than 3% by mass of 2-butanol.

16. (Original) The process as claimed in claim 2, wherein the distillation in (a) is performed at a pressure of from 0.7 to 5 bara.

17. (Original) The process as claimed in claim 16, wherein the pressure in (b) and (c) is from 0.05 to not more than 0.7 bara.

18. (Original) The process as claimed in claim 16, wherein the pressure in (b) and (c) is from at least 5 to 15 bara.

19. (Original) The process as claimed in claim 16, wherein the stream comprising 2-butanol contains less than 2% by mass of tert-butanol.

20. (Original) The process as claimed in claim 19, wherein a part of the distillate from (c) is combined with the distillate of (a) and used as a feed to the distillation in (c).

21. (Original) The process as claimed in claim 16, wherein the separating of the stream comprising 2-butanol comprises taking a vapor phase of a vaporizer of a column; or a gaseous or liquid as a side stream in a stripping section of the column.

Claim 22 (Cancelled).